

# KENTUCKY PERIODIC WATERFOWL INVENTORY

## Conducted January 5-6 2016

With the unseasonable temps and recent rain events we have experienced in KY, waterfowl numbers have been lower than average this year, and the birds we have are scattered across the flooded landscape. Hopefully, January will bring us some cold North winds, and plenty of birds to finish out the season. Listed below is the survey data obtained during our Mid-Winter Waterfowl Survey across the state. As always... stay safe and happy hunting!

### Mid-Winter Survey Report for Western Kentucky - Purchase Region

*Flown by: Pat Hahs on January 4, 2016*

Site	Dabblers	Divers	Total Ducks	Canada geese	Snows/Blues	WF Geese	Coots	Eagles	Sandhill Crane
Bayou De Chien	1120	10	1130						
Obion Creek	1550	0	1550						
Mississippi River									
Mayfield Creek	1775	0	1775	0					
Reelfoot NWR									
Ballard	16825	1500	18325	255	800	2800			
Boatwright WMA	1200	0	1200						
Ohio R. (Wickliffe-Paducah)	2650	0	2650						
Ohio R. (Paducah-Golconda)	3045	15	3060	50					
Barkley Lake (N of 68)	0	195	195						
Barkley Lake (S of 68)	0	0	0						
duck Island	2550	75	2625						
Kentucky Lake	25	365	390						
Kaler Bottoms	0	0	0						
Birdsville Islands	2200	50	2250						
Doug Travis WMA	15	0	15	3					
Obion Creek (Travis Slough tract)	0	0	0						
Obion Creek (L.E. Schaaf tract)	0	0	0						
<b>Totals</b>	<b>32955</b>	<b>2210</b>	<b>35165</b>	<b>308</b>	<b>800</b>	<b>2800</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

**Notes from Pat...** Waterfowl were very widely scattered. There have been very unusual flood events occurring on the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers with near record or record water levels in MS River just

upstream of the confluence with the Ohio River. Unusually mild temperatures preceded the flood event. Kentucky and Barkley lakes were 9-10 feet over winter pool. Desirable foraging depths in river backwaters were at much higher elevations than normal and in areas largely devoid of food resources. Species distribution is roughly consistent with early January. Pintail were observed in several areas where they typically don't move up from the south until later in January or early February. Some species such as goldeneye and canvasback normally associated with colder, mid-Winter weather were not observed in significant numbers.

### **Lower Ohio River & Western Coalfield**

*Flown by: Thomas Young on January 5, 2016*

<b>Site</b>	<b>Dabblers</b>	<b>Divers</b>	<b>Total Ducks</b>	<b>Canada geese</b>	<b>Snows/Blues</b>	<b>WF Geese</b>	<b>Coots</b>	<b>Eagles</b>	<b>Sandhill Crane</b>
Ohio R. (Owensboro-Green River)	527	0	527		250			1	
Ohio R. (Green River-Henderson)	250	0	250						
Ohio R. (Henderson-Sloughs WMA)	150	0	150				100	1	
Ohio R. (Sloughs WMA-Diamond Island)	7973	200	8173	150	7000	6500		3	
Ohio R. (Sauerheber Refuge-Uniontown, GPPL & JHHC)	2604	0	2604		250			1	
Ohio R. (Uniontown-Shawneetown)	92	0	92					1	
Ohio R. (Shawneetown-Tradewater R.)	25	0	25						
Ohio R. (Tradewater R.-E. end of Hurricane Isl.)	0	0	0	150					
Ohio R. (Hurricane Isl.-Golconda)	250	0	250						
Hovey Lake WMA (Indiana)	50	0	50						
Pond River-White City WMA	25	0	25	62			500	2	
Tradewater River	1375	0	1375	40				1	
Peabody Coal Property	940	75	1015	364	2		50	1	
<b>Totals</b>	<b>14261</b>	<b>275</b>	<b>14536</b>	<b>766</b>	<b>7502</b>	<b>6500</b>	<b>650</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>0</b>

### **Rough River – Yellowbank WMA**

*Flown by: Thomas Young on January 5, 2016*

Site	Dabblers	Divers	Total Ducks	Canada geese	Snows/Blues	WF Geese	Coots	Eagles	Sandhill Crane
Rough River	35	0	35						
Yellowbank WMA	190	0	190						
Ohio R. (Brandenburg - Owensboro)	155	0	155	60				4	
<b>Totals</b>	<b>380</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>380</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>

**Notes from Thomas...** The Ohio River and its tributaries have experienced extremely high water with flood conditions throughout most of the survey route, leaving ample waterfowl habitat throughout the region. All moist soil units are full, but were covered with ice except a couple holes kept open by waterfowl on Hovey and Slough's Refuge.

### **Mid-Winter Survey Report for Central and Eastern KY**

*Flown by: Terri Estes & Wes Little on January 4, 2016*

Site	Dabblers	Divers	Total Ducks	Canada geese	Snows Blues	WF Geese	Coots	Eagles	Sandhill Crane
Herrington Lake	22	20	42	80					
Cedar Creek Lake	60	27	102	75					
Lake Cumberland	818	25	843	0				1	
Dale Hollow Lake	44	0	46	0					130
Barren River Lake	243	22	265	25					
Green River Lake	25	5	30	1					
Taylorsville Lake	144	0	150	277					
Central Ohio River	810	10	827	0				1	
Blue Grass Army Depot	248	2	250	81			155		
Licking River (Southern)	51	11	62	32				1	
Cave Run Lake	193	7	202	125					
Grayson Lake	12	0	12	53					
Yatesville Lake	0	0	0	0					
Ohio River- (Ashland to Scioto R.)	25	0	25	30				1	
Scioto River	894	2	896	46				1	
Ohio River	644	64	732	756				2	

(Scioto R. to Licking R.)									
Licking River (Northern)	4	0	4	99					
Campbell County Lake	10	4	14	10					
Kincade Lake	0	0	0	0				1	
<b>Totals</b>	<b>4247</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>4502</b>	<b>1690</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>130</b>
	<b>Dabblers</b>	<b>Divers</b>	<b>Total Ducks</b>	<b>Canada geese</b>	<b>Snows</b>	<b>Dabblers</b>	<b>Divers</b>	<b>Total Ducks</b>	<b>Canada geese</b>

**Notes from Terri...** The mid-winter waterfowl survey for central KY was conducted on January 4, 2016. The flight started out with clear skies with mild to moderate north winds and snow flurries throughout the morning. Temperatures in the morning were 29 degrees F and warmed up slightly to 40 degrees F. Temperatures have been above normal for most of the hunting season. The rainfall has also been above normal making water available across the landscape. Water was 100% open in all central KY Rivers and lakes. All lakes were above winter pool levels except Barren River Lake and Green River Lake where shallow flats were exposed. Waterfowl numbers were below average for this time of year. The most abundant dabbling ducks were black ducks (1549) with mallards (606) being the second most abundant puddle duck with very few other puddle ducks observed. Bufflehead (47), Canvasback (40), Scaup (12), and Goldeneye (10) were the only divers observed. Canada goose numbers were way below average (458). A flock of Sandhill Cranes (130) were observed in flight above Barren River Lake. The normal concentrations of Gadwall or Merganser were not present. Happy hunting!

**Notes from Wes....** This is the report for the waterfowl survey of north-eastern Kentucky conducted on Jan 4, 2016. The flight was conducted in mostly cloudy skies with moderate winds most of day. Temperatures were below freezing in the morning but warmed to around 40 by the end of the survey. Weather has been warmer than seasonal for most of this hunting season. Based on this season's continuing abnormally high rainfall; across the landscape, water continues to be everywhere. Ponds and oxbows continue to be full and many low lying fields had standing sheet water. Shallow water was partly frozen but reservoirs and rivers were completely open. Cave Run Lake appeared to be above winter pool levels and appeared relatively clear in the lower end of the lake and very murky with recent run-off in the upper reaches of the lake. The Ohio River was higher than normal, and was partially inundating the trees along its banks. The Scioto River was mostly within its banks but recent flooding left most low lying areas covered with water. The northern section of the Licking River was high and muddy but within its banks. Numbers of dabbling ducks were average to below average for this time of year. Canada goose numbers were well below normal. The largest concentration of ducks for the day was a group of 500 mallards using a ponded area adjacent to the Ohio River. The most abundant dabbling duck was mallards (1,641). Black duck (395) was the second most abundant. All other species of ducks were less than 100 observed. Diver numbers were below average. Canada goose numbers were below average with 1232 being observed. I hope everyone continues to enjoy their time outdoors and we look forward to some more seasonable weather and hopefully some more birds.